

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, and 7-9 are pending in the application. Claims 4-6 have been canceled without prejudice herein. Claims 1-3, and 7-9 have been amended herein. Favorable reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

I. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indicated allowability of claims 4-9 subject to being amended to independent form.

Claim 1 has been amended herein to incorporate all limitations of claim 4. Claim 2 has been amended herein to incorporate all limitations of claims 1 and 5. Claim 3 has been amended herein to incorporate all limitations of claims 1 and 6. Therefore, claims 1-3 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

In order to correct the dependency, claims 7-9 have been amended herein to properly depend from 1-3, respectively. Therefore, claims 7-9 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

II. REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS 1-3 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,898,356. Since these claims now incorporate allowable subject matters as indicated in the Office Action, the rejections have been obviated. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance at an early date. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 510-843-6200, ext. 245.

Respectfully submitted,
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Haruo Yawata', written in a cursive style.

Haruo Yawata
Limited Recognition under 37 CFR § 10.9(b)

P.O. Box 778
Berkeley, CA 94704-0778
Tel: 510-843-6200, ext. 245